

AZ AER

Policy and Procedures

Manual

Revised September 2018

AZ AER POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

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SECTION 1: BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS

Members of the Board of Directors have duties and responsibilities established according to the Bylaws of AZ AER. Additional duties have been developed through Policy and Procedures. This section lists the General Duties of all Board Members. Each office then has a section listing specific duties outlined in the general AER Bylaws and those assigned through Policy and Procedures.

1.1 General Duties (as listed in the AZ AER Bylaws July, 2008):

- a. The Board shall consist of the four Officers of this Chapter, the Immediate Past-President, and six Directors-at-large elected from the membership.
- b. The Board of Directors shall serve as the governing and policy-making body of this Chapter between meetings of the membership.
- c. The Board of Directors shall hold at least three board meetings during a calendar year at the call of the President or of three other members of the Board of Directors. All Board meetings shall be open to the membership of this Chapter.
- d. A majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of business.
- e. The President, or in his/her absence, the Vice President, shall preside over meetings of the Board of Directors.
- f. The Board of Directors shall review and act upon the budget of this Chapter.
- g. Officers and Directors are required to participate in meetings of this Chapter. Participation may be through fax, electronic mail, teleconferences, attendance at meetings, or other formats approved by the Board. If any Board member fails to participate in three (3) consecutive meetings, their position will be considered vacant.
- h. In the event of a vacancy in the Board of Directors, the Board of Directors shall appoint a member of this Chapter to complete the unexpired term of such Board member, except that a vacancy in the office of the President shall be filled by the Vice President. The Board of Directors shall reassign the duties of the Past-President if a vacancy in that office should occur.

1.2 Additional Responsibilities: Each officer shall maintain files related to their duties and is responsible for transmitting those files to the next officer. Each officer will maintain files for the past three years. Files beyond three years should be sent to the Archives Committee.

1.3 Specific Duties

1.3.1 The President shall:

- a. Preside at all meetings of this Chapter: Board of Directors, Executive Committee and Membership.
- b. Initiate and coordinate a plan of operation for presentation at the first meeting of the calendar year of this Chapter's Board of Directors for approval or modification.
- c. Appoint committees and their chairpersons, delegate committee responsibilities, and serve as ex-officio member of all committees.
- d. Coordinate communication with the International AER office.
- e. Represent this Chapter as its official or designate a representative.
- f. Serve as Co-Chair of the Program Committee and provide suitable programs for this Chapter.
- g. Submit a written report to the Annual Meeting and report at each Business Meeting as appropriate.
- h. Submit a written update to each newsletter.

1.3.2 The Vice President shall:

- a. Perform the duties of the President in his/her absence.
- b. Serve as Co-Chair of the Program Committee and provide suitable programs for this Chapter.

1.3.3 The Secretary shall:

- a. Maintain a written record of the proceedings of each meeting.
- b. Notify the Board of Directors of the time and place of all meetings of the Chapter.
- c. Be responsible for the correspondence of this Chapter.
- d. Maintain records of membership and activities and make an annual report.
- e. Chair the Scholarship Committee
- f. Serve on the Archives Committee.
- g. Assist the Newsletter Editor and serve on the Committee.

1.3.4 The Treasurer shall:

- a. Receive all funds belonging to this Chapter.
- b. Pay out the same on orders approved by the Board of Directors.
- c. Maintain an itemized account of receipts and expenditures.
- d. Prepare and submit a proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year with the assistance of the Finance Committee.
- e. Submit an AER Chapter Financial Report to AER Central Office by March 15 of each year.
- f. File with the Secretary a written report to be presented at the annual meeting of this Chapter.
- g. Prepare written budget reports and financial standings for each Board Meeting
- h. Serve as the collector of fees for meetings of AZ AER.

- i. Oversee submission of tax reporting to IRS and AER Central Office

1.3.5 The Immediate Past President shall:

- a. Be responsible for facilitating communication between the Chapter Division memberships and the Board of Directors.
- b. Serve on the Program Committee.
- c. Serve as chairperson of the nominations committee and oversee elections.
- d. Maintain and update the documentation of Chapter policy and procedures.

1.4 Board Meetings: As outlined in the Bylaws, the Board must meet at least three times per year to discuss the business of the organization. The board may choose to meet as often as desired. Each meeting of the Board of Directors may consist of the following agenda items:

- a. Approval of minutes
- b. Reports from each officer
- c. Reports from each Standing and Ad Hoc Committee
- d. Reports from the field—to include:
 - 1. Legislation
 - 2. Public Education
 - 3. Membership and recruitment
 - 4. Resolutions
 - 5. Other agency/organization news and information
- e. Old/New Business
- f. Additional agenda items may be added by sending them to the President or Secretary one week in advance of the meeting.

SECTION 2: COMMITTEES

2.1 General Committee Responsibilities

2.1.1 Establishment: Committees are established through Bylaws, resolutions, or policies, and may also be established by the Board of Directors.

2.1.2 Membership: The president is responsible for appointing a Chair for each committee, where chair appointments are not mandated by the Bylaws. Committee Chair appointments are as necessary, although two years will usually represent a normal term. Committee members will be appointed to represent the geographical and professional diversity around the state, and may be chosen by the Chair, with approval of the President, and/or the Vice-President. Each committee should have a representative of the Board of Directors as a member or Chair.

2.1.3 Responsibilities of the Chairs:

- a. Maintain a committee membership representative of various agencies, professional specialties, geographic areas, etc.
- b. Establish goals for the year.
- c. Maintain contact with committee members through newsletter articles, mailings, meetings, phone contact, conference calls, etc., as necessary to conduct the work of the committee.
- d. Submit regular written reports to the Board of Directors at their meetings as necessary
- e. Submit budget requests to the Treasurer for inclusion in the Budget.
- f. Submit a brief written report presented to the membership at the Annual Meeting and subsequent Newsletter.

2.1.4 Communication with the Board of Directors: A member of the Board of Directors on the committee should facilitate communication between the committee and the Board of Directors. Committee Chairs will receive copies of Board of Directors minutes. The President is responsible to assure that communication is maintained.

2.1.5 Expenses: The Board of Directors has established funds for Committee expenses. This should cover costs of printing and mailing and some special activities requiring funds. The committee should submit a budget to the Board of Directors for approval. The Treasurer will contact Committee Chairs prior to developing the annual budget. Special requests can also be submitted during the year for the Board of Directors' consideration.

2.1.6 Records: A file should be maintained by the Chair of Committee activities and transferred to the next Chair. Files over three (3) years old should be sent to the Archives Committee.

2.2 Committees (Committees mandated by AZ AER Bylaws are highlighted in yellow)

2.2.1 ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

- a. **Committee:** Established by Resolution.
- b. **Chair:** Appointed by the President.
- c. **Membership:** At least three members chosen to represent the professional and geographic diversity of the Chapter membership.
- d. **Terms:** One year.
- e. **Duties:** Connect to and link with local, state, and national blindness and visual impairment organizations, agencies, advocacy groups, private individuals, and others who serve infants, primary/secondary-aged students, and adults; address educational and community issues that affect individuals with visual impairments and the professionals who serve them.

2.2.2 ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

- a. **Committee:** Mandated by Bylaws.
- b. **Chair:** Appointed by the President.
- c. **Membership:** Initially established by Resolution. Should consist of at least 3 members, including the Secretary of AZ AER.
- d. **Terms:** Two years.
- e. **Duties:** Procure and collect materials and information relating to the business of AZ AER and its precursor organizations; maintain and update Chapter business and committee records; monitor the storage and maintenance of archives material; plan activities to commemorate important dates in the Chapter history and disseminate information to the membership about Chapter history through the Newsletter, programs, and special events.

2.2.3 AWARDS COMMITTEE

- a. **Committee:** Mandated by Bylaws.
- b. **Co-chairs:** Last recipient of Margaret Bluhm Worker of the Year Award and last recipient of Mary Jo Martinez Outstanding Professional Award.
- c. **Membership:** Two subcommittees:
 1. Subcommittee A: Five previous recipients of Margaret Bluhm Worker of the Year Award
 2. Subcommittee B: Five previous recipients of Mary Jo Martinez Outstanding Educator Award
- d. **Terms:** For each subcommittee, members rotate off after 5 years. If lapsed membership or other exigencies create vacancies for the subcommittees, the positions should be filled by the president with other past recipients of the award.
- e. **Duties:**
 1. Subcommittee A: Oversee the process for the selection of the recipient of the Margaret Bluhm Worker of the Year Award as outlined in Section 9.1 of this manual; disseminate information regarding the award and solicit

nominations from the membership; review the nominations submitted; select the recipient; prepare the biography; plan the ceremony to be held at the Annual Meeting of the Chapter and procure the award; prepare information for public announcement.

2. Subcommittee B: Oversee the process for the selection of the recipient of the Mary Jo Martinez Outstanding Professional Award as outlined in Section 9.2 of this manual; disseminate information regarding the award and solicit nominations from the membership; review the nominations submitted; select the recipient; prepare the biography; plan the ceremony to be held at the Annual Meeting of the Chapter and procure the award; prepare information for public announcement.

2.2.4 BY-LAWS AND POLICIES COMMITTEE

- a. **Committee:** Established by Board of Directors.
- b. **Chair:** Appointed by President.
- c. **Membership:** At least three members besides the president, including the immediate past president if possible
- d. **Terms:** Two years.
- e. **Duties:** Prepare a draft update to the Policies and Procedures manual following each annual meeting, to include any necessary changes resulting from resolutions or membership recommendations, and submit the draft to the Board of Directors for a vote; additionally update the Policies and Procedures manual as necessary based on ongoing recommendations from or changes made by the Board of Directors; review proposed changes to the AZ AER Bylaws and follow procedures outlined in Article XI of the Bylaws to submit proposals to the Board of Directors and to the membership; prepare draft amendments to the Bylaws to be submitted to the Board of Directors and to the membership according to procedures in Article XI; maintain current and past copies of the Policies and Procedures Manual and the Bylaws, and ensure that current copies are posted on the AZ AER website; be thoroughly familiar with all AZ AER Bylaws, Procedures, and Policies and communicate these as necessary and appropriate to the Board of Directors and to the membership to ensure their faithful rendering.

2.2.5 FINANCE COMMITTEE

- a. **Committee:** Mandated by Bylaws.
- b. **Chair:** Treasurer.
- c. **Membership:** At least three members besides the Treasurer, including the immediate Past Treasurer if possible.
- d. **Terms:** Two years.
- e. **Duties:** Prepare a budget to be presented to the Board of Directors at the first meeting of the calendar year; review the financial status of the Chapter; review the audit report sent to AER International; make recommendations to the Board

of Directors regarding the level of existing balances, investments, and expenditures made.

2.2.6 FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

- a. **Committee:** Established by Resolution.
- b. **Chair:** Appointed by the president.
- c. **Membership:** At least three members representing the geographical and professional diversity of the state.
- d. **Terms:** One year
- e. **Duties:** Organize fundraising activities to take place during conferences/workshops and at other appropriate times of the year; solicit information via list-serv, survey, or other means regarding interests and needs of professionals that may apply to fundraising activities; maintain a list of potential donors and initiate/maintain contact with these individuals or organizations via phone, email, or letter to assist in increasing chapter funds; solicit advertisements for the quarterly or semiannual newsletter; provide a brief report on all fundraising activities to the board of directors at their meetings or via email

2.2.6 MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

- a. **Committee:** Mandated by Bylaws.
- b. **Chair:** Appointed by President.
- c. **Membership:** At least three members chosen to represent the professional and geographic diversity of the Chapter membership.
- d. **Terms:** One year.
- e. **Duties:** Maintain Chapter records on membership and provide written reports to the Board of Directors and membership at meetings; develop annual plan of activities for recruitment of new members; contact lapsed members; develop a welcome packet for new members; write newsletter articles on and present new members at each annual meeting; liaison with international office regarding membership; assist secretary in maintaining updated membership mailing list.

2.2.7 MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

- a. **Committee:** Established by Resolution.
- b. **Chair:** Appointed by the President.
- c. **Membership:** Should consist of at least 3 members chosen to represent the professional and geographic diversity of the membership.
- d. **Terms:** Two years.
- e. **Duties:** Maintain a current list of deceased individuals who have served children and/or adults with visual impairments in the state of Arizona; create an annual list of, and conduct a roll call at each annual meeting for, those individuals who have passed away since the previous annual meeting (see Section 7.10 of this manual); organize the memorial service for deceased members at each annual meeting (see Section 7.11 of this manual); communicate information about

deceased individuals via email and/or the AZ AER member list-serv as appropriate; organize and direct other memorial activities as appropriate, including the recognition of Arizona professionals who have retired from the field within the last year.

2.2.8 NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

- a. **Committee:** Established by Board of Directors.
- b. **Chair:** Appointed by President.
- c. **Membership:** At least three members chosen to represent the professional and geographic diversity of the Chapter membership, including the AZ AER secretary, who will assist the Editor as needed.
- d. **Terms:** Two years for the editor; one year for other committee members.
- e. **Duties of the Editor:** Prepare a newsletter for the membership according to the schedule developed by the Board of Directors (spring and fall); announce to the membership deadlines for submissions; work with the Secretary to pursue submissions as necessary. Some possible areas to include in the Newsletter: student achievements and special items of educational interest; information related to specific geographic areas or student/client populations; items concerning specific services or divisions of the visual impairment field; new member corner; advertisements; upcoming events planned by the Chapter, local organizations/agencies, national organizations, etc.

2.2.9 NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

- a. **Committee:** Mandated by Bylaws.
- b. **Chair:** Past President, or Chair appointed by the President in the event of a vacancy in the Past President position.
- c. **Membership:** At least three members chosen to represent the geographic diversity and professional training of the Chapter membership.
- d. **Terms:** Two years.
- e. **Duties:** Submit a plan for the nominations process to the Board of Directors, including the time line for nominations/elections as well as positions to be elected; solicit nominations according to the procedures outlined in Section 8 of this manual; contact those nominated to determine willingness to serve; explain responsibilities and requirements of positions; distribute responsibility sheets to and collect bios from potential nominees; prepare a list of members in good standing eligible to vote; present the slate of candidates with bios to the membership via electronic distribution according to the elections process outlined in Article IX, Section 3, of the AZ AER Bylaws and Section 8 of this manual; present the results of the election to the membership via the AZ AER member list-serv.

2.2.10 PROGRAM COMMITTEE

- a. **Committee:** Mandated by Bylaws.
- b. **Co-chairs:** Vice President and President
- c. **Membership:** Committee can involve many members, including any directors-at-large who would like to participate, in various aspects of the programs for the year.
- d. **Terms:** Two years
- e. **Duties:** Plan two programs during the year under the guidelines in Section 7 of this manual. Programs include a one-day workshop and a 1½ to 2-day Annual Meeting/Conference, each of which include at least one business meeting. Submit budget requests to Board of Directors for approval; coordinate all aspects of the program and facilities before and during the programs; evaluate programs and develop recommendations for future programs.

2.2.11 SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

- a. **Committee:** Established by Board of Directors.
- b. **Chair:** Secretary
- c. **Membership:** At least three members chosen to represent the professional and geographic diversity of the Chapter membership, and should include the Treasurer.
- d. **Terms:** Two years
- e. **Duties:** Review scholarship and grant applications and recommend suitable recipients for financial awards, according to criteria and procedures in Sections 5-6 of this manual; review and update scholarship and grant policies as organizational needs require; maintain a current list of scholarship criteria/procedures on the website; advertise scholarship and grant opportunities via email list-serv and membership blast email; follow-up with scholarship and grant recipients to ensure that all requirements for financial awards are met; announce and introduce scholarship winners as appropriate at annual meetings.

SECTION 3: DIVISIONS

3.1 Division Organization--AER International

3.1.1 Establishment: Divisions are established by the International Board of Directors.

3.1.2 Membership: Division Memberships are indicated by the members annually on their membership form. Members have one primary division, but may join additional divisions.

3.2 Division Organization--AZ AER

- a. Administration & Leadership Division
- b. Rehabilitation Counseling & Employment Division
- c. Multiple Disabilities & Deafblind Division
- d. Psychosocial Services Division
- e. Low Vision Rehabilitation Division
- f. Information & Technology Division
- g. Infant & Preschool Division
- h. Orientation & Mobility Division
- i. Education Curriculum Division
- j. Vision Rehabilitation Therapy Division
- k. Division on Aging
- l. Itinerant Personnel Division
- m. Personnel Preparation Division
- n. International Services & Global Issues Division
- o. Physical Activity & Recreation Division
- p. Neurological Visual Impairment Division

3.2.1 Membership: Lists of membership can be obtained from the International office to assist chapters in identifying persons associated with each division.

3.3 Contacts: The Past-President will identify a Division Contact for each Division having five or more Arizona members. The Past-President will facilitate communication between the Division Contacts and the Board of Directors.

3.3.1 Purpose of Division Contacts:

- a. Keep the Divisions informed of the activities and actions of the Board of Directors.
- b. Allow for increased input from the Divisions to the Board of Directors.
- c. Facilitate participation of Divisions at meetings of AZ AER.
- d. Leadership development.

3.3.2 Communications: Division Contacts will receive:

- a. At least once a year, a listing of members in the Division.
- b. Notice of all Board Meetings and Minutes of Board Meetings.
- c. Other communications as determined by the Past President and/or Secretary.

3.3.3 Responsibilities of Division Contacts: Contacts agree to have their names published as a contact for the Division and be available to members interested in their Division. Contacts may choose to contact Arizona members of the Division, submit newsletter articles, conduct meetings at the Annual Meeting, present a program at an Annual Meeting, or apply for a mini-grant. Funds can be requested for additional Division activities, such as mailings.

SECTION 4: FISCAL POLICIES

4.1 Reimbursement to Members of the Board of Directors

4.1.1 Board Meetings, Membership Meetings, Regional or International Conferences: AZ AER does not reimburse officers or members of the Board of Directors for personal, accommodative, or travel expenses related to these meetings. Officers and members may be reimbursed for costs incurred which are directly related to AZ AER annual conference or semi-annual workshop program expenses, as authorized by the President and Treasurer and supported by the Program Committee budget.

4.1.2 Leadership training: International AER may offer leadership training opportunities for Chapter officers, Board Members, or Committee Chairs. A budget line item for leadership training can be established for this purpose.

4.1.3 Program Chair or Designee: The Program Chair or Co-Chair may be reimbursed expenses related to site selection for the Annual Meeting and expenses for the night preceding the Annual Meeting.

4.1.4 Waiver of Registration Fees: Any Board Member who has served for at least one year may opt to waive the registration fee to conferences or workshops run by the Chapter, while they continue to serve on the Board of Directors.

4.2 Reimbursement/Stipends for Speakers

4.2.1 Conference Breakout Session Presenters: Conference breakout session presenters are not reimbursed for expenses or paid stipends when presenting at an AZ AER meeting. Presenters may have their registration fee waived for the day(s) on which they present. Members may be asked to complete a presenter's agreement form for presentations given at the annual conference or workshop.

4.2.2 Keynote: Keynote speakers at meetings may receive reimbursement for travel, expenses, and a stipend or fee as agreed upon by the Board of Directors. The costs related to keynote speakers should be discussed with the Board of Directors via meeting, phone conference, or online forum.

4.3 Budget and Sale of Items

4.3.1 Fundraising: Individuals or businesses may make donations to AZ AER, and should be provided with a receipt. AZ AER may explore various ways to raise funds, including raffles, newsletter advertisements, sale of items, etc. Proceeds from all fundraising activity will be placed in the general AZ AER fund, unless individuals donate for a specific purpose or request a particular direction of donated items or

funds. Because AZ AER is a charitable 501(c)3 organization, money or donated items are tax-deductible.

4.4 Reallocations of Budget Items: The President and the Treasurer, or the board as a whole, may jointly make a decision to reallocate budget line items if necessary for the business of the Chapter. Total budget expenditures may not be increased without a vote of the Board of Directors.

4.5 Committee/Division Budgets: Committees and Divisions may not establish organizational budgets for the purpose of retaining funds. They may develop budget-related recommendations and submit to the Board of Directors to request funds for conducting their activities. Additional fundraising for specific activities must be approved by the Board of Directors.

4.6 Purchase Orders: If organizational Purchase Orders are submitted for payment of registration at the Annual Meeting or other General Meetings, billing must be remitted as soon as possible to avoid cash-flow problems.

4.7 Advertisements: Advertisements may be solicited and accepted for the AZ AER newsletter. Rates include, per issue: 1/8 page, \$25.00; 1/4 page, \$50.00; 1/2 page, \$75.00; Full Page, \$100.00. Newsletter advertisements should not take up more than 25% of the newsletter.

SECTION 5: GRANTS

5.1 Leadership Grant

Provide funding to the President or designee to participate in training programs, such as local or national leadership conferences. These funds will supplement those provided by AER International if available.

5.2 Mini-Grants

5.2.1 Purpose: Mini-Grants offer an opportunity for divisions or individual members to further their professional development by buying equipment or books for professional purposes or information sharing, or to attend a professional conference or workshop and to bring this information back to the membership or a specific division. Mini-Grants also offer an opportunity for AER divisions or combination of divisions to sponsor a workshop or activity of interest and to receive support from AZ AER.

5.2.2 Eligibility: Applicants for Mini-Grants must be members in good standing of AZ AER. An individual member or division that has received a mini grant is not eligible to apply for another mini grant for two calendar years from the date of receipt. The number of grants and amount of money available each year will be determined by the Board of Directors during the budget process.

5.2.3. Guidelines:

5.2.3.1 Workshops: Mini-grants obtained from AZ AER for the purpose of sponsoring division workshops are to be used for the following purposes, and according to the following guidelines:

- a. Speaker fees (honorarium, travel, etc.).
- b. Room rental or fees.
- c. Printing and mailing of announcements, registrations, and agendas.
- d. Members must be admitted free to the event.
- e. Non-members may also attend for a small fee requisite with the budget and expenditures of the workshop.
- f. Expenditures for food and refreshments will be included in the mini-grant budget and compensated through any revenues generated by the event.
- g. Any profit or funds from the mini-grant that are not expended must be returned to the AZ AER treasurer.

5.2.3.2 Books/Equipment: Mini-grants obtained from AZ AER for purpose of obtaining equipment and/or books are to be used according to the following guidelines:

- a. Equipment and/or books are to be made available to the members of the division at AZ AER meetings.
- b. Equipment and/or books are to be demonstrated to the general membership at an AZ AER meeting.

- c. Equipment and/or books are to be made available for the members of the division to borrow and try with their clients/students.
- d. Equipment and/or books may be donated to an appropriate organization after Division members have used them, with a vote by the Board of Directors.

5.2.3.3 Education: Mini-grants obtained from AZ AER for the purpose of attending professional conferences or workshops will not exceed a maximum award amount of \$500.00. Funds are to be used for the following purposes, and according to the following guidelines:

- a. Registration fees
- b. Travel expenses, including transportation, lodging, and meals
- c. Purchase of materials to share with the membership or a specific division
- d. Recipients of educational mini-grant funds are expected to share information obtained at the conference/workshop with the general membership by submitting an article to the AZ AER newsletter, and/or presenting at an AZ AER conference or workshop within one year of program attendance.

5.2.4 Procedures: Applicants should submit a Mini-Grant Application form to the scholarship committee. The application form requests a detailed budget for division-sponsored workshops, equipment and/or books desired, or conference/workshop agenda with specific areas of interest to the division described. Once the award is approved by the scholarship committee and the board, the recipient will be contacted by the scholarship committee chairperson with an announcement of the award, and then by the treasurer to determine the recipient's preferred method of receiving the grant money.

- a. Funds may be requested beforehand to pay necessary deposits, fees, and up-front costs. If an award is made upon this condition, the award recipient will communicate with the treasurer and provide all information necessary for the treasurer to make the payments. All receipts for expenditures made by the treasurer related to the grant award must be maintained by the treasurer and kept with organizational records in a hardcopy (original, copy, or print) format.
- b. Funds may also be requested as reimbursement for expenses incurred related to the activities specified on the application form. If an award is made upon this condition, receipts for all expenses must be provided to and maintained by the AZ AER Treasurer, and a check will be issued up to the amount awarded, not exceeding the professional mini-grant maximum of \$500.

5.3 Consumer Grants

5.3.1 Purpose: Consumer Grants offer an opportunity for individuals with visual impairments to attend a workshop or activity of interest, or to purchase consumer items that enhance quality of life relative to accommodation of a visual impairment, and to receive support from AZ AER.

5.3.2 Eligibility: Applicants for Consumer Grants must be sponsored by a member in good standing of AZ AER. Each applicant may receive funds once every two years. The number of grants available each year will be determined by the Board of Directors during the budget process. However, the maximum award of an individual grant will not exceed \$200.00.

5.3.3. Guidelines: Applicants should request funding for a workshop, other activity, or materials that will enhance their quality of life and for which other funding is not available. Once a grant has been awarded, the recipient is expected to share with the membership the benefits of the grant through presentation at a conference or article in the newsletter.

5.3.4 Procedures: The AZ AER member sponsor will submit a consumer grant application on behalf of the consumer to the scholarship committee. Once the award is approved by the scholarship committee and the board, the recipient will be contacted by the scholarship committee chairperson with an announcement of the award, and then by the treasurer to determine the recipient's preferred method of receiving the grant money.

- a. Funds may be requested beforehand to pay necessary deposits, fees, and up-front costs. If an award is made upon this condition, the award recipient will communicate with the treasurer and provide all information necessary for the treasurer to make the payments. All receipts for expenditures made by the treasurer related to the grant award must be maintained by the treasurer and kept with organizational records in a hardcopy (original, copy, or print) format.
- b. Funds may also be requested as reimbursement for expenses incurred related to the activities specified on the application form. If an award is made upon this condition, receipts for all expenses must be provided to and maintained by the AZ AER Treasurer, and a check will be issued up to the amount awarded, not exceeding the consumer grant maximum of \$200.

5.4 AZ AER Member Grants

5.4.1 Purpose: The purpose of AZ AER Member Grants is to assist individuals who work in specific professional support capacities, or who are enrolled in full-time university programs dedicated to preparation for providing services to children or adults with visual impairments, to become members of the AER international organization.

5.4.2 Eligibility:

- a. Any individual who has attended two AZ AER events and who works as a part- or full-time paraprofessional in the state of Arizona for a school district, state agency, or other educational or rehabilitative organization, providing services to a child or adult with a visual impairment or in a classroom that serves children with visual impairments, is eligible to receive the award.
- b. Any student currently living in the state of Arizona who has attended two AZ AER events and who is enrolled full-time in a university program related to visual impairment (i.e., TVI, O&M, low vision clinical specialty, vocational rehabilitation, etc.) is eligible to receive the award.
- c. Events that applicants may attend pursuant to receiving this award include all AZ AER-sponsored conferences, workshops, and other trainings for which CEU certificates may be obtained beginning November 1, 2018.
- d. Each recipient may receive the award one time only.

5.4.3 Guidelines:

5.4.3.1 Use of the Grant: The grant may be used solely for the purpose of obtaining a support/clerical or student AER membership for one year, to be renewed thereafter by the scholarship recipient as desired.

5.4.3.2 Procedures:

- a. An individual interested in applying for the grant will submit an application, and two CEU certificates indicating proof of attendance at two AZ AER events, to the AZ AER scholarship committee chair. If certificates are not available, an applicant may also submit the dates of event attendance to the scholarship committee chair, which dates can be confirmed using event participation records.
- b. Upon confirmation of participation at two events and current paraprofessional or full-time student status of an individual living and/or working in the state of Arizona, the scholarship committee chair will notify the applicant in writing by email or letter of the success of the application, and submit a request to the treasurer in writing by email or letter to complete the AER member application process.
- c. The treasurer will contact the applicant, obtain the information necessary to complete the AER membership application, and make the payment for support/clerical or student membership, as appropriate.

5.4.3.3 Grant Follow-Up: The AZ AER president will contact an award recipient within six months of membership enrollment for the purpose of inviting the recipient to participate in the organization (i.e., as a committee member, or by giving a presentation, contributing to the newsletter, assisting in conference/workshop preparation, consulting on a special project, etc.). While agreement to participate will not be required of an AZ AER member grant recipient, this invitation will be extended in order to provide a more effective future connection between the recipient and the organization, including its members, leadership, and professionals throughout the state.

SECTION 6: SCHOLARSHIPS

6.1 Student Merit Scholarship

6.1.1 Purpose: The Student Merit Scholarship is to be awarded to a student with a visual impairment to attend an educational program offered outside his or her current educational setting. These learning opportunities do not need to be related to the enhancement of blindness or low vision skills. The maximum award will not exceed \$500.00.

6.1.2 Eligibility: Applicants must be 4-22 years of age, and enrolled in an academic program within the state of Arizona. The application must be accompanied by a letter of recommendation from the student's TVI, who must be a member in good standing with AER. Each recipient may receive funds one time only.

6.1.3 Guidelines:

6.1.3.1 Use of the Scholarship: The scholarship may be used for the following purposes:

- a. Program tuition, books, registration fees, or other expenditures specifically related to the educational program.
- b. Travel or lodging for the program.
- c. Cost of meals during travel to, from, and during the program.

6.1.3.2 Procedures: The AZ AER member who also serves as the student's TVI will submit a student merit scholarship application on behalf of the student to the scholarship committee. Once the award is approved by the scholarship committee and the board, the TVI and the recipient or recipient's family, as appropriate, will be contacted by the scholarship committee chairperson with an announcement of the award, and then by the treasurer to determine the recipient's preferred method of receiving the grant money.

- a. Funds may be requested beforehand to pay necessary deposits, fees, and up-front costs. If an award is made upon this condition, the award recipient or recipient's family will communicate with the treasurer and provide all information necessary for the treasurer to make the payments. All receipts for expenditures made by the treasurer related to the grant award must be maintained by the treasurer and kept with organizational records in a hardcopy (original, copy, or print) format.
- b. Funds may also be requested as reimbursement for expenses incurred related to the activities specified on the application form. If an award is made upon this condition, receipts for all expenses must be provided to and maintained by the AZ AER Treasurer, and a check will be issued up to the amount awarded, not exceeding the student scholarship maximum of \$500.
- c. Awards issued as reimbursement in the form of checks or electronic bank transfer will generally be issued by AZ AER in the name of the award recipient. They may also be issued in the name of a parent/guardian who may receive the funds on behalf of a recipient.

- d. Funds may be issued in multiple increments, up to the total amount of the scholarship awarded, over an agreed-upon amount of time for expenses incurred that directly relate to scholarship-based activities specifically delineated by the applicant on the application form.
- e. If partial funds not amounting to the total awarded are required, and no additional funds are necessary for the activities specifically delineated by the applicant on the application form, the scholarship amount will be adjusted to reflect issuance of those partial funds only.

6.1.3.3 Scholarship Follow-Up and Report:

- a. The recipient will submit a letter to the general membership with information about the program attended and the educational/other benefits it provided. The letter may be read to the membership at a business meeting of an annual conference, including by the recipient if possible. Alternatively, the letter may be published in the Chapter newsletter.
- b. At the time the award is issued, the recipient will be informed in writing (i.e., print, electronic, and/or braille) of the responsibility to submit a letter to the membership as well as the ways by which the letter may be submitted.
- c. If necessary, the scholarship committee chair will follow up with the recipient by email or phone within six months of award receipt to determine the recipient's preferred option for submitting/presenting the letter and an appropriate deadline for its submission.
- d. If age or nature of additional disabilities prevent the recipient from personally writing and submitting/presenting a letter, the letter may be dictated to or written and submitted/presented by a parent, guardian, TVI, or other person involved in the recipient's educational program.

6.1.4 Conflict of Interest: Teachers of students with visual impairments who are also members of the AZ AER Board and/or Scholarship Committee may refer their own students for student merit scholarships. However, to avoid a potential conflict of interest, a Board/Scholarship Committee member who refers his or her own student may not participate in a formal Scholarship Committee or Board vote to award funds to that student, and should not advocate during Scholarship Committee or full Board discussions for that student to receive an award after writing the initial letter of recommendation that accompanies the student's scholarship application.

SECTION 7: PROGRAMS AND MEETINGS

7.1 Annual Schedule of Programs: Each year, AZ AER will present a one-day Workshop, as well as a 1½- to 2-day Annual Meeting/Conference that is planned in conjunction with the Business Meeting. The workshop will typically be offered in the spring, while the conference will typically be offered in the fall.

7.2 Program Content: The program committee should work from evaluation forms of recent programs to determine any consistent topics or themes. Specific topics or speakers can be combined into an overall theme developed by the committee. Themes and topics should be discussed with the Board of Directors. Content of programs should:

- a. Be of a general nature that is of interest to all members, regardless of professional field or clients served.
- b. Include several presenters who can address various interests.
- c. Offer concurrent sessions to address needs of various membership groups.

7.2 Location/Facilities:

- a. The location of the one-day workshop should be discussed with the Board of Directors. Areas may be chosen for reasons of topic or speaker, and should be alternated between northern, southern, and central areas of the state.
- b. The location of the Annual Meeting should be discussed by the Board of Directors. The decision can include whether to hold the Meeting in a city or resort area.
- c. The Program Committee may investigate potential sites and their costs and benefits, and present the information to the Board.
- d. If a commitment needs to be made prior to the first meeting, the Executive Committee can make the necessary decisions.

7.2.1 Other Guidelines

- a. Costs for guest and meeting rooms, banquet and exhibit area, and audiovisual/technology setup should be considered.
- b. The program committee or executive board will determine how the conference site will handle registration, as well as whether forms and/or flyers should be included in the registration packets.
- c. All facilities should be accessible--see Accessibility Policy (Section 9 of this Manual).
- d. Hotel Staff should be invited to have some training regarding blindness and visual impairment.

7.3 Budget: A budget for conferences and programs should be prepared, according to the following guidelines:

- a. In general, the one-day workshop should be planned with as few expenditures as possible to generate revenue that can help to offset costs annual meeting and other costs.
- b. The annual meeting should be planned either to break even in revenue and expenditure, or to cost no more than registration/vendor fees in addition to revenue from the spring workshop can cover. The budget for this meeting should be approved by the Board of Directors.
- c. If an invited speaker or other unusual situation requires additional money than originally budgeted, it should be cleared with the Board of Directors and an amendment to the budget should be passed. This should typically be considered only if the organization is financially healthy and fundraising is not necessary to cover the additional cost.

7.3.1 Budgets will include:

- a. Invited Speaker/Keynote fees, travel expenses, lodging, and meals.
- b. Meeting rooms.
- c. Audiovisual equipment and setup.
- d. Food (banquet, snacks, etc.).
- e. Printing and braille (program, flyers, maps, etc.).
- f. Decorations as necessary or appropriate.
- g. Conference- or workshop-related supplies (labels, flash drives, CDs, name tag holders, folders, etc.)

7.4 Registration Fees: Registration fees should be determined by dividing the total cost by anticipated number of participants. AER members should be offered a reduced rate as compared to AER nonmembers. Registration payment should include:

- a. Meals.
- b. Session/meeting room fees.
- c. Table rental.
- d. Audiovisual rental/setup.
- e. Speaker fees, etc.

7.4.1 Registration Fees for AER student members: Students who are living in the state of Arizona and are enrolled full-time in a university visual impairment program (local or distance) are eligible for a reduced rate for conferences and workshops. University visual impairment programs can include, but are not limited to, Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments, Orientation and Mobility Instructor, Rehabilitation Teacher, and Low Vision Therapist.

7.4.1 Registration Fees for Individuals Working in Support/Clerical Position: Individuals working in support/clerical positions, including paraprofessionals, braille transcribers,

administrative assistants, etc., may be offered a reduced registration rate to attend a conference or workshop if the board determines that this will be an appropriate measure within the confines of the budget for each event.

7.5 Publicity: The AZ AER newsletter should provide AZ AER members with access to the following:

- a. Announcements regarding conference/workshop dates and other events for the calendar year (meeting announcements should be sent out at least six weeks in advance for 1-day workshops and at least eight weeks in advance of the Annual Meeting).
- b. Reminders about and previews for meetings.
- c. Program and registration information.

7.5.1 Flyers: Flyers should:

- a. Be presented in a way that will entice people to attend conferences and workshops.
- b. Demonstrate why conference or workshop programs are of vital importance to participants and their professional development.
- c. Encourage employers to support employees in their attendance.

7.6 Registration Information: Registration information provided to members via email, flyer distribution, newsletters, or other means of publication, should include the following:

- a. Details about the agenda.
- b. Information about invited speakers and presenters.
- c. Clear directions/map to the site.
- d. Special parking arrangements if applicable.
- e. Site accessibility.
- f. Food.
- g. Media needs.

7.6.1 Food: To the extent possible, arrangements should be made to plan for special dietary needs (i.e., including a vegetarian option). However, event participants should also be made aware on the registration form and in other advertising as appropriate that not all needs can be accommodated and that they will need to plan accordingly.

7.6.2 Media: All conference handouts should be offered in accessible format(s). These can include braille, large print, and/or electronic files. A section on the registration form should be included where participants can request alternate media formats. See Accessibility Policy (Section 9 of this Manual).

7.6.3 Other: Registrants should be encouraged to request accommodation for any other special needs that they might have, either on the registration form or via email or other appropriate communication forum.

7.7 Program materials: Program committee members should consider and provide for the following:

- a. Number and type of handouts to provide.
- b. Whether to include folders or bags with conference materials.
- c. Creation of name tags.
- d. Certificates that can be signed by a Board Member or program Co-Chairs to allow members to receive professional continuing education credits.

7.8 Conference Logistics: Committee and other board members should be prepared to assist with the following prior to or on the day of the conference or workshop, as necessary, to:

- a. Direct traffic.
- b. Answer questions.
- c. Provide facility orientations.
- d. Meet and greet speakers.
- e. Assist vendors with set-up and display room accommodations.
- f. Ensure that presenters have needed materials.
- g. Organize meeting rooms.
- h. Coordinate audiovisual setup.
- i. Introduce speakers and facilitate sessions.

7.9 Roll Call: On November 8, 2013, a resolution was passed by majority vote of a quorum at the AZ AER annual meeting to commemorate deceased AZ AER members. An annual roll call was established and memorial committee created to serve this purpose.

7.9.1 Roll Call Guidelines: At each annual conference, the names of all individuals who have served children and/or adults in the state of Arizona will be read as a roll call. After each name is announced, those present will respond “Here” in acknowledgement of the contributions these individual(s) have made to the visual impairment profession in Arizona.

7.10 Memorial Service: On November 6, 2015, a resolution was passed by majority vote of a quorum at the AZ AER annual meeting to provide for an annual memorial service. The purpose of the service is to provide a “time of remembrance ... for attendees to gather and share memories and thoughts about our Arizona AER colleagues who have passed away in the past year.”

7.10.1 Memorial Service Guidelines: The memorial service will be organized and scheduled as a coordinated effort between the Memorial and Program Committees. The service will commemorate all Arizona professionals who have served in the field of visual impairment and who have passed away since the previous annual meeting. The memorial committee should maintain a consistently updated list of deceased members

for this purpose. AER membership is not required for an Arizona professional to be honored during the service. Prior to the annual meeting, a member of the Memorial Committee should contact Arizona professionals through the AZ AER list-serv and other appropriate means to request the names of any individuals who should be added to the list in preparation for the service.

7.11 New Members: A list of new members who have joined AER since the previous annual meeting will be presented at each annual meeting by the President, Vice-President, or Secretary, or by a member of the Membership Committee as delegated by the President.

7.12 Evaluation: Each program should be evaluated, to include feedback from AZ AER members regarding both the full conference/workshop and individual sessions. These evaluations should be used to direct planning and preparation for future events, including choice of topics and speakers as requested by individual participants.

7.14 Follow Up: Post-conference/workshop activities should include the following

- a. Letters of appreciation sent to presenters
- b. Continuing education credit certificates sent to participants
- c. Travel/accommodation reimbursements made to specially invited speakers/keynote presenter
- d. Summary of sessions provided for the next newsletter

SECTION 8: ELECTIONS

8.1 Elections Procedure: As reflected in the AZ AER Bylaws, updated November 2015 by resolution of the board and majority vote of a quorum at the AZ AER Fall 2015 conference, elections shall be held two months prior to each annual meeting of the membership, using electronic means to solicit nominations and elect officers and directors. The officers and directors shall be officially installed at the last business session of the annual meeting that immediately follows the elections.

8.2 Guidelines: Nominations and elections will be conducted according to the following provisions and guidelines.

8.2.1 Nominations

- a. Nominations for open board positions will be requested from the membership-at-large via electronic means (i.e., email, website, membership list-serv, National AER blast advertisement) beginning no less than 90 days prior to the annual meeting.
- b. Nominations for open board positions will be accepted from the membership-at-large up to 60 days prior to the annual meeting.
- c. Nominees will be informed of their potential candidacy, and their acceptance obtained, before a list of candidates is announced to the membership-at-large no more than 14 days after nominations close.

8.2.2 Elections

- a. Elections will take place over a period of 14 days immediately following the announcement of candidates to the membership-at-large.
- b. Elections will be conducted using an online survey created by National AER and will close no later than 30 days prior to the annual meeting.
- c. Results will be tallied by National AER immediately following the close of elections, and then announced to the membership-at-large.

8.2.3 Introduction, Training, and Installation of Officers- and Directors-Elect

- a. Officers- and directors-elect will be introduced to the board and receive training on board responsibilities and organization Bylaws/policies during the 30 days prior to the annual meeting.
- b. Board members- and directors-elect will be officially installed at the last business session of the next annual meeting and assume their responsibilities immediately thereafter.

SECTION 9: AWARDS

9.1 Margaret Bluhm Worker of the Year: The Margaret Bluhm Worker of the Year Award was established at the Annual Meeting of the Arizona Chapter of AAWB in 1972. The membership voted on the first two recipients. The practice was then established that past recipients would form the committee to select future recipients. In October, 1979, it was the consensus of the group that only one person per year would be selected to receive the Worker of the Year Award.

9.1.1 Guidelines:

- a. The Chapter shall select a Margaret Bluhm Worker of the Year annually, with appropriate presentation at the Annual Meeting.
- b. The Selection Committee shall constitute a subcommittee of the Awards Committee. It shall consist of not less than five past recipients, chaired by the immediate past recipient. If one or more of the past five award recipients are unable to serve on the committee, the chairman will communicate with the AZ AER president to fill any vacancies with invitations to other past recipients of the award.
- c. Nominations shall be broadly solicited from the entire Chapter membership through announcements in General and Board meetings, as well as via online communication (email and website), Newsletters, and other appropriate publications.
- d. Any professional working in the state of Arizona in a capacity that serves children or adults with visual impairments, and who is not a previous winner of this award, shall be eligible for nomination.
- e. Evaluation shall be based on a nominee's total career, with emphasis on the most recent years.
- f. Award recipient criteria includes (in order of priority):
 1. Service to persons with visual impairments, primarily in Arizona.
 2. Service to profession or the field of visual impairment
 3. Service to AER, primarily AZ Chapter.
 4. Service to other special needs groups or to the community
 5. Other relevant accomplishments.

9.1.2 Presentation:

- a. On February 10, 1989, AZ AER voted to honor Margaret Bluhm by naming the award the Margaret Bluhm Worker of the Year Award.
- b. On November 8, 2013, AZ AER voted to include the history of Margaret Bluhm and reasons for naming the award in her honor in the presentation.
- c. Past recipients of the award should be acknowledged in the presentation.

9.1.3 List of Recipients: The list of recipients is maintained and updated yearly by the Archives Committee.

9.2 Mary Jo Martinez Outstanding Arizona Professional Award: The Mary Jo Martinez Outstanding Arizona Professional Award was established by resolution and majority vote of a membership quorum at the Annual Meeting of the Arizona Chapter of AER in November 2015. The award was created to honor Arizona educators and other professionals who serve infants, children, and adults with visual impairments, acknowledging that

- a. Arizona is a unique state with extraordinary geographic, ethnic, family, and cultural diversity that often presents unique challenges to educators and other service providers of children and adults with visual impairments, and that
- b. Individuals who work with students or clients whose cultures, languages, or ethnicities differ from their own often must learn to work within those cultures and demonstrate particular appreciation and respect for them as a major part of providing family- and individual-centered services.

9.2.1 Guidelines:

- a. The Chapter shall select a Mary Jo Martinez Outstanding Arizona Professional Award annually, with appropriate presentation at the Annual Meeting.
- b. The Selection Committee shall constitute a subcommittee of the Awards Committee. It shall consist of not less than five past recipients, chaired by the immediate past recipient. If one or more of the past five award recipients are unable to serve on the committee, the chairman will communicate with the AZ AER president to fill any vacancies with invitations to other past recipients of the award.
- c. Nominations shall be broadly solicited from the entire Chapter membership through announcements in General and Board meetings, as well as via online communication (email and website), Newsletters, and other appropriate publications.
- d. Any Arizona-based professional working with children or adults who have visual impairments, who is not a previous winner of this award, shall be eligible for nomination. This includes individuals who provide educational, related, low vision, medical, therapeutic, rehabilitation, media, vocational, or other services.
- e. An individual should be nominated by an AER member, but does not have to be an AER member to receive the award.
- f. Award recipient criteria: The award will honor an individual who shows, during the course of a single year or throughout a career, extraordinary attention to, understanding of, and respect for family, cultural, ethnic, and geographic diversity which contribute directly to personal and educational success for infants, children, or adults with visual impairments.

9.2.2 Presentation:

- a. On November 6, 2015, AZ AER voted to honor Mary Jo Martinez by naming the award the Mary Jo Martinez Outstanding Educator Award.
- b. Past recipients of the award should be acknowledged in the presentation.

9.2.3 List of Recipients: The list of recipients is maintained and updated yearly by the Archives Committee.

SECTION 10: ACCESSIBILITY

10.1 Accessible Media: AZ AER shall provide all materials in large print, Braille, or electronic format as requested or necessary. Each new member will be asked to indicate his/her preferred reading medium. Annually, the availability of alternate media publications will be advertised in the newsletter.

10.1.1 Speakers: AZ AER will request that speakers provide materials in alternative media formats and will assist speakers in creating such materials as needed.

10.2 Physical Accessibility/Sensitivity to Individuals with Disabilities: Facilities utilized by AZ AER should meet standards for accessibility by persons with disabilities. When appropriate, conference or workshop site staff should agree to training that enables them to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. Staff should also assist AZ AER in providing maps, menus, and other site-related information for Braille/electronic transcription; and demonstrate appropriate attitudes when providing services to individuals with disabilities.

10.3 Consumer Input: Program participants will be asked to comment on and make suggestions regarding accessibility issues when evaluating a program.

SECTION 11: POSITIONS OF AZ AER

11.1 Public Positions

11.1.1 Official statement of positions: An executive officer, Board member, Committee Chair, Division Contact, or AZ AER member may state a given position as an AZ AER position only if there has been one of the following:

- a. Vote of membership at a General Business Meeting.
- b. Resolution of membership at a General Business Meeting.
- c. Vote of the Board of the Directors taking a position for AZ AER.

11.1.2 Unofficial statement of positions: An executive officer, Board Member, Committee Chair, Division Contact, or AZ AER member may state a given position without a vote listed above only if the individual acknowledges the following (verbally or in writing):

- a. He/she is speaking as a private individual.
- b. The given position is not representative of AZ AER.

11.2 Public Support: The President or other officer of the Board of Directors may write a letter of support for a grant application on behalf of AZ AER for AZ AER members. If several members/agencies are competing for the same competitive award, letters should be of a general nature, stating the needs and values of the project or activity. The Board of Directors should avoid recommending one member over another in such a competition.

SECTION 12: RESOLUTIONS

12.1 Purpose of Resolutions: Resolutions may be introduced to establish committees and awards, as well as AZ AER positions, policies, and procedures. They may also be introduced to direct organizational funds to various activities or causes deemed worthy by the AZ AER membership.

12.1.1 Introduction and Presentation of Resolutions: A resolution may be introduced by members of the AZ AER board, or by other individuals or groups of individuals from the AZ AER membership. Any person or persons introducing resolutions must be current AER members. A resolution may be made at an annual meeting, and voted on by all AER members present. A majority vote of a quorum present at an annual meeting constitutes passage of the resolution. A resolution that receives a majority vote must be submitted in writing to the AZ AER board. The Policy & Procedures Manual must then be updated as necessary within 30 days of the annual meeting to reflect the change in organizational practice.

12.1.2 Amendments to the AZ AER Bylaws: All petitions or majority votes of the AZ AER Board which recommend changes to the AZ AER Bylaws must follow the organization's legally established amendments procedure, found in in Article XI of the AZ AER Bylaws.